

## **Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, 14 May 2008

Boards and Commissions Room, City Hall

6:00pm - 8:00pm

SPAB Members Present: Celeste Gilman, Chair; Howard Wu; Chris Tachibana, Secretary; Jon Morgan; Kristen Lohse; Mark Bandy; Paul Niebanck; Tom Williams, T. Frick McNamara

Also present: Jim Curtin (SDOT liaison); Brian Lee (SBAB liaison)

Presenters: Jodie Vice (Legislative Aide to Seattle Councilmember Jan Drago), Abby Rudell (SDOT GIS) and Alinda Page (Construction Coordinator)

Absent: Randy Earle, Ben Smith

Visitors: Mike Ramey, Jesse Griebel, Jane Doh, Lisa Quinn (Feet First Executive Director); Jacob Struiksma; Jane Dunkel (Office of City Auditor)

### **1. Introductions and Minute Approval for April Meeting and May Retreat (6:05)**

#### **2. Public Comment (6:06)**

Mike Ramey from Capitol Hill asked about the city's policies on diamond plate aluminum utility plates. At 11th and Pine, he fell over one and broke his arm. He mentioned others that he feels create a pedestrian and cycle hazard, and asked why surfaces with better traction aren't used.

T. Frick agreed with the diamond plate problem and said concrete lids are usually denied in design plans, because they require several people to lift. She said designers try to keep utility lids out of walk and cycle zones but often, they are not installed where the designers intended.

Celeste suggested getting this information into the Pedestrian Master Plan by contacting her.

Jacob Struiksma has taken pictures of pedestrian hazards including a square pole on Pine that was in the walk zone and poorly maintained sidewalks and landscaping. Mike Ramey commented on holes and cracks in sidewalks. Chris suggested the website that Celeste had emailed ([www.seattle.gov/transportation/potholes/](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/potholes/)) to report sidewalk problems. Mike said the city has been responsive to complaints made via website.

Jane Dunkel gave out her card and asked for comments regarding permitting, closures during construction and impacts on rights of way. They are interested in

collecting feedback on communication with the public and are available for meetings. Their time frame is within the next few weeks.

### **3. Construction Impacts, presenters Abby Rudell (SDOT GIS) and Alinda Page (Construction Coordinator) (6:15)**

Alinda Page, consultant to the city, gave background on a mapping and tracking system being developed to monitor capital improvement projects that affect right-of-ways in the center city (South Lake Union to SODO). The goal is to keep track of, and coordinate projects as the viaduct improvements begin and growth projects are initiated. The system is in the early stages of development.

Abby explained how GIS data are collected from SDOT, WSDOT, Sound Transit and others. She showed maps that color coordinate current projects and demonstrated the analytic systems under development. Unique features of this system are collecting data on both construction impacts and detours and keeping parking, street and sidewalk data separate, since they affect different users.

Celeste asked if this covers both private and public projects. Abby said greater coverage is coming but is not online yet. The system is current through about 2018 and can be viewed quarterly. Data can be viewed in layers that show both location and timing of projects, so overlapping projects can be seen and coordination can be judged. Projects can be viewed as lines showing affected areas rather than single points. Abby also demonstrated how the system can be viewed using Google Earth. She said they are currently working on policies that would coordinate construction projects and deal with potential conflicts. They are hoping to have a public version by 2009.

Mark asked about posting a KML file on the SDOT website. Alinda said there might be security and other conflicts. Abby said there is a construction file out for 2008.

T. Frick asked about the level of detail for pedestrian impact. Alinda said there's a sidewalk level, and they are now discussing how much detail will be in this system and how much will be a offshoot. Abby demonstrated how the system showed information on sidewalk closures or partially reductions in capacity. Celeste said adding information on which side of the sidewalk is closed and if pedestrians have to cross multiple times would be beneficial.

Howard asked if transit impact is included. Abby said this information might be added by certain users, e.g. King County.

T. Frick and Jacob said the most practical for pedestrians would be a public, web-based version with specific on sidewalk closures and alterations. Jim said the city, with the help of Feet First, is looking at what other cities (Tucson, Washington DC) have and how it can be implemented in Seattle. Mike suggested a tool like Metro's Trip Planner that would give specific, up-to-date walking routes.

Alinda envisioned letting agencies other than SDOT develop this system into publicly useful tools. It should be feasible as long as each agency keeps their information current. This system hasn't existed before because of the large amount of data that must be collected and combined. She said people are very positive about having this system, because of the large number of projects coming up and the need to coordinate.

Brian, Mark and Alinda discussed who would do database management. Brian suggested PSRC (Puget Sound Regional Council). Alinda said it would be SDOT for the short-term and Mark said cities and counties would be better, because they are in charge of permitting, and project delivery and management. Brian and Alinda will contact each other on this issue.

Mark suggested including areas where closures were not permitted. Abby demonstrated paving moratoriums, where newly paved areas can't be ripped out for three years except in emergencies. Mark was interested in keeping streets and sidewalks parallel to construction open through street use permit. Jim and Abby said an example would be holiday moratoriums.

A discussion ensued on the most effective construction closure notices and policies. Solid fences and signs that go to the ground and even plywood walls are better than fences with holes and caution tape that are difficult for sight-impaired to detect. Continuous paths are a main concern. Jim said various issues are ability of inspectors to monitor signage by contractors and variations in ground material and circumstances at the construction site. Jon said Washington DC is a good example of diverting people into the street and even creating temporary ramps and fencing when necessary. Mark suggested getting contractors into this discussion. Jane said this is on their list. She has spoken with people in DC who have created a scheme addressing this. The merits of various specific signages and solutions were discussed.

#### **4. Pedestrian Safety Campaign Framework, presenter Jodie Vice (7:20)**

Jodie passed out a draft Executive Summary on the Council Pedestrian Safety and Awareness Campaign. Last fall, the City Council hired The Royer Group to examine pedestrian safety campaigns. The Council has designated \$250,000 for a pedestrian safety program and needed data prior to implementing it.

A team of consultants and stakeholders including the City Council and representatives from SDOT, SPAB, SPD and the Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory group set up the goals and purposes. Reducing pedestrian-vehicle collision became the main priority, since it increases safety, which promotes walking, and it is measurable. High-frequency collision intersections and high pedestrian use areas will be the focus. The target audience will be both drivers and pedestrians, since each group can engage in risky behavior.

Next, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the campaign, based on campaigns conducted in other cities were examined. Research and

measurements will focus on particular areas identified as high-pedestrian areas. The pedestrian clusters are downtown, the West Seattle junctions, Capitol Hill, First Hill and the University District. Corridors are Rainier, Lake City Way, Aurora, Stewart, James, N 85th, N 45th, Greenwood, Holman, MLK Way, 35th Ave SW and 23rd Ave.

Marketing objectives and goals began with identifying potential modifiable behaviors and test interviews. Based on results, the group created a positioning statement based on mutual acknowledgment and awareness between drivers and pedestrians. This creates a message that is the same for pedestrians and drivers.

The consultants thought this would be a multi-year effort, especially for measurement purposes. This will affect budgeting; private funding might be sought.

Safety issues were discussed, including double-threat situations, for example on Alaskan. Jim said all crossings on Alaskan are scheduled for signals. Awareness, listening, paying attention and patience while walking and driving must be emphasized.

Celeste mentioned that in order for measurements to be meaningful, baseline data will be required. She asked how the message would be publicized. Jodie said they hoped to broaden the message, connect it to issues like health, and seek private funding.

## **5. State Ped/Bike Plan Letter Approval (tentative) and Policies & Procedures Approval (7:45)**

Mark had drafted an advisory and asked for comments via email by Friday.

Comments on the Policies and Procedures changes should be emailed by Monday.

## **6. Subcommittees (report from retreat) (7:50)**

Subcommittees were formed based on workplan categories. Chairs and members will set schedules and meetings, but the entire Board will be notified and will advise any action.

## **7. Upcoming Agenda Items (7:55)**

Jim scheduled a SDOT Safe Routes to Schools/Student Education presentation.

T. Frick suggested a presentation on the Northgate upzone.

Tom suggested a presentation on South Lake Union by SLUFAN (South Lake Union Friends and Neighborhood Community Council)

Tom gave a summary on the city's newly released budget, based on projected decreases in revenue and increased expenditures, e.g. adding more police and a new jail by 2012. Affected will be the general fund budget and capital improvements. Tom said we will have to be diligent about following the budget regarding pedestrian issues. Celeste suggested this and police and enforcement issues for June.

Mark said the next Waterfront Open House is at Adams Elementary in Ballard on Thursday and suggested all attend.

Jon suggested trying again to get the new Council members.

T. Frick announced the Northgate walking audit on June 1 at 3 p.m.

Howard suggested a meeting with the SPD liaison.

Jim said Mayoral appointees will meet with Council on Tuesday 20 May 9:30 at City Hall.

Kristen will bring snacks to June meeting.

**8. Adjourn (8:05)**